

Medical Societies

PUERPERAL SEPSIS

"Puerperal Sepsis" was the subject discussed at the meeting of the Royal Society of Medicine, in the Section of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, on December 3rd. Dr. Phillips, of the Monsall Fever Hospital, Manchester, described what seemed to him the most rational form of treatment,—namely, a means of increasing drainage by promoting a flow of lymph through the uterus. A catheter was passed up into the uterine cavity, and whatever pus might have collected was allowed to drain off, and then the cavity was filled with glycerine, which is a powerful tissue dehydrant. This was repeated once or twice a day until signs of active inflammation had passed. In cases of septicæmia, intravenous injections of novarsenobillon as a bactericidal agent, and the transfusion of immunized blood to strengthen the patient's defense mechanism, often gave remarkable results.

Dr. Colebrook, discussing the results of laboratory investigations, said that in his opinion the hæmolytic streptococcus was the infecting organism in over 90 per cent of cases of septicæmia. The virulence of the infection could be judged by

the number of organisms per c.c. of blood, more than 100 being fatal. The aim of any treatment should be to produce an outward flow, and this he believed was most effectually accomplished by glycerine.

At the Edinburgh Obstetrical Society on November 11th, Professor Watson, the retiring president, spoke on "Puerperal Sepsis. In his address he stated that all methods of treatment fell under one of the three heads: prophylactic, specific and non-specific. The importance of ante partum care, which ought to include the removal of all toxic foci, and the treatment of purulent vaginal discharges was emphasized. Fresh air, sunlight and good nursing were essential. Anti-streptococcic serum seemed beneficial in some cases, but of all forms of specific therapy that of immuno-transfusion had in Professor Watson's hands proved most successful. The patient is transfused with blood from a donor, who three hours previously had been immunized with stock vaccine. Fowler's position, arsenobenzol and quinine have also proved helpful aids in the treatment of puerperal infection.

ELEANOR PERCIVAL

Vaccine Treatment of Whooping-cough.—A Pondman (*Nederl. Tijdschr. v. Geneesk.*, October 24th, 1925, p. 1893), records the results of a questionnaire sent to medical practitioners who had employed the pertussis vaccine prepared by the Dutch Serological Institute at Utrecht; 89 answers were received, with the following results. The local reaction appears to have been insignificant. Only six practitioners stated that a small infiltration had occurred after large doses had been given, and in one case a transient urticaria was observed. As regards a general reaction 18 showed a slight rise of temperature not exceeding one degree, and in 5 the temperature was somewhat higher, the highest recorded being 102.6°. No reply was received about a focal reaction—that is to say, the effect of the vaccine on the respiratory tract. As regards the prophylactic value of the vaccine 12 answers were received, of which 8 were favourable, 3 were partly favourable, and 1 unfavourable. Of

the 89 answers concerning the curative effect of the vaccine, 21 had to be excluded as the numbers treated were too small to justify a conclusion. Of the remaining 68, 61 were favourable and 7 unfavourable. Pondman's conclusions as the result of the answers to the questionnaire are as follows: (1) As a general rule it is advisable to increase the dose. (2) There is no objection to this, as no bad results were reported. (3) The vaccine should be prepared from different strains of pertussis bacilli.—*Brit. Med. Jour.* Jan. 9, 1925.

"Doctor," said he, "if there is anything the matter with me don't frighten me half to death by giving it a scientific name. Just tell what it is in plain English." "Well," said the doctor, "to be frank with you, you are merely lazy." "Thank you, doctor," said the patient. "Now give me a scientific name for it, so that I can go home and tell the wife."